

**Southeast Gateway Area
Board Meeting Minutes
August 8, 2009
Abbey Road Christian Church**

The Board of Directors of the Southeast Gateway Area of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Mid-America met at Abbey Road Christian Church on Saturday, August 8, 2009.

Present were Patricia Clark, Sara Crump, Mike Dixon, Troy Dooley, Joy Faires, Melissa Feldhaus, Jacque Foster, Greg Heinsman, Barbara Jarman, Sharon Keith, Kay Marshall, John Morton, Margie Pride, Penny Ross-Corona, Dave Sager, Doyle Taylor, Steven Williams, and Susan Moore.

1st Vice Moderator Jacque Foster called the meeting to order at 10:00. (Moderator Doug Cripe was on vacation.)

Troy Dooley led the opening devotion, reading Matthew 5:13-14 and reminding us that we are, indeed, the salt of the earth. He challenged us to flavor the world and left us with the final question: "Who will you influence?"

Margie Pride read an excerpt from Under God by Toby Mac and Michael Tait. The selection included the surrender speech of Chief Joseph (1840-1904), which he made on October 5, 1877. He finished his speech by saying, "Hear me, my chiefs. I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever." The cause of his death 27 years later was recorded by the physician as "broken heart." The message from the Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism team is to remember and honor the contributions to our nation's history made by people of color.

Jacque Foster welcomed the group and asked that everyone introduce him/herself. Those present were also asked to give their congregation name and choose one word to describe their congregation right now. Greg Heinsman was introduced by Troy Dooley as a new Board member from Abbey Road Christian Church for 2010-2011.

Minutes from the April 18, 2009 Meeting

The minutes from the Board's last meeting were not read as they had been emailed to the group both immediately following that meeting and just prior to this meeting (Board packet pages 2-4). Steven Williams moved to approve the minutes. Kay Marshall seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Melissa Feldhaus presented the financial report as it was distributed prior to the meeting (Board packet pages 5-6). She also went through the management letter from Mare and Company which related to our 2007 audit. She explained, point by point, the actions taken to address each of the suggestions made. She announced that Steve Staicoff is currently working on the 2008 audit, which should be ready for the Area Assembly on September 19. Audits for 2009 and beyond are going to be done through the Region at a cost of \$500 per year. The Board directed the Area Office to supply members with financial summaries on a monthly basis via email. Penny Ross-Corona announced that, though the Bridgeton Fund has recovered approximately \$20,000 of its previous losses, there will be no Bridgeton grants again this year.

Mike Dixon moved to receive the report as presented. Steven Williams seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Moderator's Report

Penny Ross-Corona presented the Moderator's report (Board packet page 10) in Doug's absence. She explained that the Orchard Crest Task Force (Doug Cripe, Sharon Keith, Jeff Moore, John Buxton, Jon Daniel, Carole Hughes, and herself) are still in a questioning process and do not yet have many answers. The Area was very lucky to contract with Rickman Center and Camp MO-VAL after the storm at Orchard Crest (her hard work and quick action surrounding these contracts were later commended by Mike Dixon), though we did still have 24 cancellations since we had to change the dates of CYF, Chi Rho, and JYF camps to fit Rickman Center's availability.

We have not yet met with the insurance adjustor, but Doug Cripe, Jeff Moore, Jon Daniel, and Wendell Bellew will meet with him on Tuesday, August 11. We have a contract with a logger (Board packet page 13) to remove the storm damaged timber and to select cut on an ongoing basis. Since the type of tree that we have at Orchard Crest (Black Oak) begins to rot from the inside once it reaches 18 inches in diameter, this select cutting is a standard forestry practice. We have already received a check for \$2,187.53 for some of the storm damaged trees. These funds will be held separately from other Area funds until their use is determined.

The Region also has a Rickman Center Task Force that is currently working to determine the best future for its outdoor ministries program. One of the possibilities being discussed is a Region-wide program.

Executive Committee

There was no Executive Committee report as there had been no activity since the last meeting. The Executive Committee will meet on Wednesday, September 2.

Administrative Report

There was no Administrative Committee report.

Property Committee Report

A report was submitted by Wendell Bellew outlining the recent Orchard Crest expenses and describing the damage by the storm on May 8th (Board packet pages 11-12). A copy of the logging contract was also included in the Board packet (page 13).

Ministry Division Report

There had been no Ministry Division activity since the last meeting but Mike Dixon reported that he would be participating in the Commission on Ministry in Jefferson City next week.

Mission Division Report

Larry Thomas had submitted a Mission Division report (Board packet page 14) but was not present. The report consisted primarily of the announcement that Florissant Valley Christian Church would begin nesting Broomtree Christian Church in December 2009.

Dietra Wise of Liberation Christian Church had submitted a written report (Board packet page 15) but was not present.

Margie Pride gave the Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism report verbally.

- On June 11-13, 36 people attended the Regional training event.
- There will be an advanced training scheduled for September or October.
- In the Mid-America Region there has been a 24% increase in giving to Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism.
- The annual PR/AR offering will be collected on September 27 and October 4, 2009. Materials to promote the offering will be sent to churches soon.
- The PR/AR task force will be presenting a workshop at the Area Assembly on September 19.

Nurture Division Report

Nurture Division chair Brian Kirk had submitted a report (Board packet page 17) but was not present. This report was reviewed, as well as the additional camp utilization and financial data (Board packet pages 18-20). It is important to remember that the funds collected this year for camp fees did not offset any Orchard Crest expenses; they were used to pay the fees at Rickman Center and Camp MO-VAL.

Nominating Committee Report

Margie Pride presented the Nominating Committee Report (Board packet page 21). In addition to the people listed in the report, Lura Flowers of Dover Place has recently agreed to serve. The committee is in conversation with someone who may agree to serve as the Financial Coordinator. The 2nd Vice-Moderator will come from the congregation hosting the 2011 Area Assembly. This leaves 7 at-large Board positions to still be filled. Please forward any suggestions to Margie. Steven Williams made a motion to accept the report and authorize the Executive Committee to appoint the additional members. Doyle Taylor seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Area Minister's Report

Penny Ross-Corona presented the Area Minister's report (Board packet page 22). She highlighted the fact that she has been doing a lot of preaching lately. She noted the 200th anniversary of Fredericktown Christian Church and 2 search and call situations. Vaughn Wright is no longer serving First Christian Church in Dexter due to his continued health concerns, but is still living in the parsonage and participating in the life of the church as he is able. Rev. Dr. Larry Colvin is serving as Transitional Minister. Moe Ball has left New Life Christian Church United in Poplar Bluff and has moved to Columbia, where his wife was already living.

Penny reminded the group that everyone who normally submits reports for Board meetings should submit one for the Area Assembly. These reports are due by September 1 and should cover the last 2 years' activity.

She noted that this is a very important time for the Board and acknowledged the high level of responsibility and decisiveness required. She is grateful, excited, hopeful, and optimistic about the Area's future.

Old Business

The group acknowledged and thanked those Board members who have completed their terms and will not be serving in 2010. They were Pat Clark, Sara Crump, Melissa Feldhaus, John Morton, Margie Pride, Dave Sager, and Doyle Taylor.

The next Board meeting will be held on January 30, 2010. The devotion will be led by Kay Marshall. John Morton will look into it being held at Hamilton Christian Church.

The 2011 Area Assembly will be held on September 17, 2011 at Central Christian Church in Granite City, Illinois.

New Business

The proposed 2010-2011 budget was distributed and explained by Melissa Feldhaus.

It included 2 separate projections for each year – one assuming that the summer camping program, as well as Prime Timers and the Women's Retreat, would take place at Orchard Crest, the other assuming that they would not.

The bottom line for 2010 for the former was (\$10,129) and for the latter was \$1,343 (a difference of \$11,472).

There was much discussion including Penny outlining the facts as we currently know them surrounding the financial implications of operating Orchard Crest:

- At this time we do not know, even roughly, the dollar amount we will get on our insurance claim.
- The Region is currently in a decision making process with Rickman Center, which could have Region-wide implications for outdoor ministries.
- We are committed to providing a summer camping program. Planning for this must begin in December and dates/locations must not be changed after they are set.

Steven Williams moved that the Board lock-down Orchard Crest for 2010 so that we may begin to plan elsewhere. Dave Sager seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

More discussion was held regarding Orchard Crest including:

- Investing the logging money to offset camp fees
- The listening conferences and surveys revealed that cost is not necessarily the biggest factor in kids going to camp. Many churches simply do not have many active kids and those kids have many other interests as well.
- Should we consider an inner-city day camp?
- We should not necessarily limit our thinking to utilizing Rickman Center and Camp MO-VAL only, though we must keep in mind our covenant agreement with the Region.

Penny Ross-Corona and Susan Moore were temporarily excused at this point so that the Board could discuss the budget as it related to their potential salary increases.

Dave Sager moved to approve the 2010 budget (the version NOT using Orchard Crest) with, not the proposed 3% salary increase, but a 2% salary increase for both the Area Minister and the Area Administrative Assistant. Joy Faires seconded the motion, which passed with one no vote.

Steven Williams moved to hire a consultant to answer the following questions:

1. Can we make Orchard Crest competitive?
2. What would it take to make it competitive?
3. What other considerations should be made as we discern the future of Orchard Crest?

The motion indicated that the Orchard Crest Task Force should do some research and recommend such a consultant by the next Board meeting in January, if not by the Area Assembly in September.

Doyle Taylor seconded the motion which failed with only two votes.

Doug Cripe, Jeff Moore, Jon Daniel, and Wendell Bellew will be meeting with the insurance adjustor on Tuesday, August 11. The Orchard Crest Task Force will be meeting again on August 20.

Kay Marshall moved to ask the Area Assembly to empower the SEGA Board to decide on a 2011 budget after more decisions have been made regarding the future use of Orchard Crest. Steven Williams seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The financial statements for the Area Assembly will show the 2009 budgeted amounts, the YTD actual amounts, and the projected year-end amounts.

Penny complimented the Board on its difficult work and decisions.

Margie Pride ended the meeting with prayer at 2:00.

Respectfully submitted by
Susan Moore
SEGA Administrative Assistant